

VICENTE GONZALEZ  
34TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CAPITAL MARKETS  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY,  
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May 4, 2023

The Honorable Greg Abbott  
Governor of Texas  
P.O. Box 12428  
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Governor Abbott,

I write urging you to provide all information utilized to justify requiring the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) to inspect every commercial vehicle crossing through Veterans International Bridge and the Free Trade International Bridge at Los Indios, and request you immediately halt inspections until such information is provided. These additional inspections will severely disrupt trade, further exacerbate our supply chains, and raise prices for countless of hard-working American families.

Your catastrophic policies requiring additional and unnecessary inspections in April of 2022, cost the state of Texas an estimated \$477 million per day. Our communities should not have to pay the price of your failure. The efficient flow of cross-border commerce is critical to our nation's economic stability, and additional, uncoordinated inspections will significantly impact local supply chains in Texas and across the United States. The Veterans International Bridge at Los Tomates and the Free Trade International Bridge at Los Indios, where these inspections are taking place, have already started to see negative impacts on consumers and businesses and are reportedly experiencing eight-to-ten-hour delays. These two ports of entry account for more than \$10.5 billion in cross-border commerce annually.

Failing to provide an advanced notice to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and local officials on these additional state inspections inhibits the efficient flow of commerce and U.S. Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) ability to conduct timely inspections. Though DPS has cited safety compliance issues, including vehicle maintenance and driver qualifications, as cause for these inspections, no such reports warranting this extra layer of inspections have been shared with relevant officials.

I share your concerns with reports of noncompliance and prioritize the safety of South Texans above all else. However, I am concerned that this inspection regime is limited to ports of entry within the 34<sup>th</sup> District of Texas. To that end, I request that you provide the following information:

1. Please provide a thorough record of compliance issues reported by DPS leading up to DPS inspections at Veterans International Bridge and Free Trade International Bridge at Los Indios.
2. Are Veterans International Bridge and Los Indios the only international bridges in Texas experiencing compliance issues?
  - a. Please provide any additional information as to why these inspections were only implemented at the aforementioned locations.
  - b. Please provide regular compliance reports as long as DPS conducts these inspections.
3. Was the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, any Congressional office, and/or local authorities informed these inspections would begin before May 2, 2023?
4. How many inspection agents will be assigned to these locations while these inspections are occurring to limit disruptions to legitimate traffic and trade?

I urge you to provide this information to the people of South Texas and the American business community that is most effected as soon as possible, and work with federal and local officials to meet compliance standards transparently and reinstate normal commercial inspection procedures.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'VG', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Vicente Gonzalez  
Member of Congress